

ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT APPROVAL 

STATE BOARD MEETING DATE May 21, 2007

SUBJECT: Set the Passing Standard for the Middle Grade Language Arts/Reading, General Science and Social Studies Content Exams

SUBMITTED BY: Jan Amator, Deputy Associate Superintendent of Highly Qualified Professionals

MANAGEMENT TEAM REVIEW: May 3, 2007

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ARS§15-533(A) states, “To qualify for either a basic or standard teaching certificate.... A person must pass each component of the proficiency examination.” In November 1997, the Arizona Department of Education adopted new rules regarding the evaluation of educators applying for state certification. The new rules required that applicants for certification pass a test of subject knowledge. Candidates for teacher certification must also pass a test of professional knowledge and meet a requirement for understanding the United States and Arizona Constitutions. The purpose of the Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment (AEPA) program is to ensure that each certified educator has the necessary knowledge to practice effectively in Arizona public schools. The RFP adopted by the State Board of Education June 2004, provided for the development of an Early Childhood Education professional knowledge assessment and subject knowledge assessments in English as a Second Language, Bilingual Education, and Middle School core content areas of math, science, social studies, and English-language arts.

The test development process that ADE and National Evaluation Systems (NES) designed for the AEPA involves numerous steps to ensure that the tests are customized for the Arizona educational context, aligned with Arizona educational standards, and judged to be appropriate and important for assessing the knowledge and skills required of entry-level educators by the State of Arizona.

The Arizona Academic Standards provide the basis of the test objectives for the AEPA Middle Grade Language Arts/Reading, General Science and Social Studies content exams.

During the development of the Middle Grade Language Arts/Reading, General Science, and Social Studies exams, NES consulted Arizona documents, collaborated with Arizona educators, validated each middle grade language arts/reading, general science, and social studies test objectives in multiple ways and engaged Arizona educators in providing professional judgments concerning the passing standards for the Middle Grade

Language Arts/Reading, General Science and Social Studies exams. In addition, to ensure compliance with technical and professional standards, NES obtained the ongoing guidance of a committee of Arizona and national assessment experts.

Key Components of the process that the ADE and NES employed to the Middle Grade content exams are summarized below.

- Establishment of Arizona Content and Bias Review Committee
- Definition and Review of Test Content
- The Content Validation Survey
- Distribution of Final Test Objectives
- Preparation of Test Items
- Bias and Content Review of Test Items
- Pilot Testing
- Preparation of Study Guides
- Preparation and Administration of the Middle Grade exams
- Determination of Passing Standards
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Marty Karlin, Senior Area Director from National Evaluation Systems (NES), will be in attendance at the May Board meeting to respond to questions and provide guidance in establishing the recommended passing standard for the Middle Grade content exams.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED: [☐] INFORMATION [☒] ACTION/DESCRIBED
BELOW

- Adopt the passing standard for the AEPA Middle Grade Language Arts/Reading exam as recommended by the Arizona Educator Assessments Advisory Committee (AEAAC) with a panel-based multiple-choice section score of 59 and the panel-based constructed-response section score of 5.
- Adopt the passing standard for the AEPA Middle Grade General Science exam as recommended by the Arizona Educator Assessments Advisory Committee (AEAAC) with a panel-based multiple-choice section score of 49 and the panel-based constructed-response section score of 4.
- Adopt the passing standard for the AEPA Middle Grade Social Studies exam as recommended by the Arizona Educator Assessments Advisory Committee (AEAAC) with a panel-based multiple-choice section score of 51 and the panel-based constructed-response section score of 5.

Attachments: Yes [☒] No [☐]